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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/055,162	11/07/2001	Shinobu Wada	44471-266135 (13700)	9562

23370 7590 07/14/2006

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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3623

DATE MAILED: 07/14/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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DETAILED ACTION

Introduction

1. The following is a final office action in response to the communications received on May 17, 2006. Claims 1-14 are now pending in this application.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The examiner has reviewed the patents and articles supplied in the Information Disclosure Statements (IDS) provided on November 7, 2001, September 23, 2004, and August 31, 2005.

Response to Amendments

3. Applicants' amendments to claims 1-2, 4, 7-8, 10, and 13-14 are acknowledged. Examiner withdraws the 35 U.S.C. §112 and 35 U.S.C. §102(b) rejections and asserts 35 U.S.C. §103 rejections.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicants' arguments filed on May 17, 2006 have been fully considered but are not found persuasive. Applicants argue Schloss fails to teach controlling a work having a plurality of works steps "for developing semiconductor devices".

In response to Applicants' argument Schloss fails to teach controlling a work having a plurality of works steps "for developing semiconductor devices", Examiner respectfully disagrees. The recitation "for developing semiconductor devices" has not been given patentable weight because the recitation occurs in the preamble. A preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it merely recites the

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purpose of a process or the intended use of a structure, and where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone. See *In re Hirao*, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976) and *Kropa v. Robie*, 187 F.2d 150, 152, 88 USPQ 478, 481 (CCPA 1951).

Additionally, Schloss does not explicitly teach a method “for developing semiconductor devices”, however, Schloss does disclose a method for scheduling events that can be applied to a variety of industries, regardless of the intended field of use of the method. Schloss teaches a method for scheduling events in the healthcare industry, though the system has utility in other applications (see column 14 lines 43-46). The system being adapted “for developing semiconductor devices” is irrelevant since the intended use does not change the overall functionality of the system. The intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Therefore, it would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the Schloss system “for developing semiconductor devices” because Schloss system is designed to be used in a scheduling work items with a plurality of work steps regardless of the intended use.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schloss et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5692125).

As per claim 1, Schloss teaches:

A group work control system for controlling a work having a plurality of work steps through a network of terminals connected to each other by a communication line, said group work control system comprising:

A file generator which is connected to said network and configured to generate a schedule file in which the schedule of said work steps is written (see column 4 lines 11-67, column 5 lines 1-16, and figures 2 and 3; where an event can be planned. There are required fields (work steps) for the generation and scheduling of the event. Once all of the proper information is submitted, the system generates a schedule.);

A database which is configured to store said schedule file in order that said schedule file is accessible through said network (see column 5 lines 28-44 and figure 1; where an electronic calendar is a database that contains events and event groups. This enables events to be scheduled.); and

An output device which is configured to provide work items to be conducted in the respective work steps on the basis of said schedule file

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as obtained (see column 3 lines 20-39 and figure 1; where a display adapter serves as an output device for displaying the schedule file and all of the work items contained in each schedule).

Schloss does not explicitly teach a method “for developing semiconductor devices”. However, Schloss discloses a method for scheduling events that can be applied to a variety of industries, regardless of the intended field of use of the method. Schloss teaches a method for scheduling events in the healthcare industry, though the system has utility in other applications (see column 14 lines 43-46). The system being adapted “for developing semiconductor devices” is irrelevant since the intended use does not change the overall functionality of the system. The intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Therefore, it would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the Schloss system “for developing semiconductor devices” because Schloss system is designed to be used in a scheduling work items with a plurality of work steps regardless of the intended use.

As per claim 2, Schloss teaches:

The group work control system as claimed in claim 1 further comprising:

A tool executing device which is configured to execute an application program for use in conducting said work items according to a tool executing file which contains necessary tool information (see column 4 lines 11-67, column 5

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lines 1-16, see column 7 lines 50-67, column 8 lines 1-7, and figures 2, 3, and 11; where the scheduling file has fields available for additional information. This additional information field can contain any information users would want, including information regarding tools necessary to complete work items).

As per claim 3, Schloss teaches:

The group work control system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said output device is provided with a function of displaying guide information about working to be conducted by a user when conducting said respective work items corresponding to said work steps (see column 7 lines 50-67, column 8 lines 1-7, and figure 11; where scheduled events have blocks available for to display information regarding data, worked already performed, or work to be performed.).

As per claim 4, Schloss teaches:

The group work control system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said file generator has a function of registering the works of a project and a function of altering a template file which is provided corresponding to said works of the project which contains a standard work time (see column 5 lines 28-63 and figures 2 and 3; where a project can register with the scheduler to ensure that a date is available for that event. Events can be based off of templates and a user can modify (alter) a template to account for the necessities of the project. A condition of a template can be a schedule time and performance time for

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selected dates. The schedule time and performance time are the same as the standard work time.)

As per claim 5, Schloss teaches:

The group work control system as claim in claim 1, further comprising:

A logic operation device which his configured to judge whether or not previous works have been finished in advance of said work items as provided (see column 4 lines 41-65, column 9 lines 1-40, and figures 2, 3, 7A, and 12; where the system accounts for dynamic conditions. Dynamic conditions are conditions that need to be met prior to performance of the actual event. The system contains a function that has a Boolean result determining whether the condition is satisfied or not. If the condition is not satisfied, then the even can be adjusted. The adjustment can include modifying or canceling the event. Furthermore, with the scheduled event is displayed all of the previous work items and all of the subsequent work items for the event.); and

A setup device which is configured to prepare tools required for next work items when the previous works have been finished (see column 4 lines 41-65, column 9 lines 1-40, and figures 2, 7A, and 12; where the system has a prepare to perform time function. This function describes all of the steps necessary to have been completed prior to the work about to be completed.).

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As per claim 6, Schloss teaches:

The group work control system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

A file updating device which is configured to update said schedule file when it is confirmed that a user has completed a work item (see column 13 lines 21-67, column 14 lines 1-42, and figures 12A and 12B; where the system checks the dynamic conditions and determines where the conditions have been satisfied or not. The system then updates based on the results of this determination.).

As per claim 7, Schloss teaches:

A group work control method for controlling a work having a plurality of work steps through a network of terminals connected to each other by a communication line, said group work control method comprising:

Generating a schedule file in which a schedule of said work steps is written (see column 4 lines 11-67, column 5 lines 1-16, and figures 2 and 3; where an event can be planned. There are required fields (work steps) for the generation and scheduling of the event. Once all of the proper information is submitted, the system generates a schedule.);

Storing said schedule file in a database accessible through said network (see column 5 lines 28-44 and figure 1; where an electronic calendar is a database that contains events and event groups. This enables events to be scheduled.); and

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Displaying work items to be conducted in the respective work steps on the basis of said schedule file (see column 3 lines 20-39 and figure 1; where a display adapter serves as an output device for displaying the schedule file and all of the work items contained in each schedule).

Schloss does not explicitly teach a method "for developing semiconductor devices". However, Schloss discloses a method for scheduling events that can be applied to a variety of industries, regardless of the intended field of use of the method. Schloss teaches a method for scheduling events in the healthcare industry, though the system has utility in other applications (see column 14 lines 43-46). The system being adapted "for developing semiconductor devices" is irrelevant since the intended use does not change the overall functionality of the system. The intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Therefore, it would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the Schloss system "for developing semiconductor devices" because Schloss system is designed to be used in a scheduling work items with a plurality of work steps regardless of the intended use.

As per claim 8, Schloss teaches:

The group work control method as claimed in claim 7 further comprising:

Storing a tool executing file which contains necessary tool information for an application program used to conduct said items (see

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column 9 lines 11-25 and figures 7A, 7B, 12A and 12B; where an event contains a function or program. This function or program contains information regarding the necessary external conditions and Boolean logic to determine if those conditions have been met.);

Obtaining said tool executing file in response to selection by a user (see column 9 lines 11-25 and figures 7A, 7B, 12A and 12B; where the tool is obtained in the regular sequence of the event. The event is selected by the user and the function or program is enabled and executed at the necessary time); and

Executing said application program by said tool executing file (see column 9 lines 11-25 and figures 7A, 7B, 12A and 12B; where the function or program is executed to determine whether the necessary external conditions have been satisfied and to determine which future work item for the event needs to be modified or altered).

As per claim 9, Schloss teaches:

The group work control method as claimed in claim 7 further comprising:

Displaying guide information about working to be conducted by a user when conducting said respective work items corresponding to said work steps (see column 7 lines 50-67, column 8 lines 1-7, and figure 11; where scheduled events have blocks available for to display information regarding data, worked already performed, or work to be performed.).

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As per claim 10, Schloss teaches:

The group work control method as claimed in claim 7 further comprising:

When said schedule file is generated registering a development project;

Obtaining a template file which is provided corresponding to said project and in which contains a standard work time (see column 5 lines 28-63 and figures 2 and 3; Events can be based off of templates and a user can modify (alter) a template to account for the necessities of the project. A condition of a template can be a schedule time and performance time for selected dates. The schedule time and performance time are the same as the standard work time.); and

Altering said template file when required (see column 5 lines 28-63 and figures 2 and 3; Events can be based off of templates and a user can modify (alter) a template to account for the necessities of the project. A condition of a template can be a schedule time and performance time for selected dates. The schedule time and performance time are the same as the standard work time.).

As per claim 11, Schloss teaches:

The group work control method as claimed in claim 7 further comprising:

Judging whether or not previous works have been finished in advance of said work items as displayed (see column 4 lines 41-65,

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column 9 lines 1-40, and figures 2, 3, 7A, and 12; where the system accounts for dynamic conditions. Dynamic conditions are conditions that need to be met prior to performance of the actual event. The system contains a function that has a Boolean result determining whether the condition is satisfied or not. If the condition is not satisfied, then the even can be adjusted. The adjustment can include modifying or canceling the event. Furthermore, with the scheduled event is displayed all of the previous work items and all of the subsequent work items for the event.); and

Preparing execution of tools required for the next work items when the previous works have been finished (see column 4 lines 41-65, column 9 lines 1-40, and figures 2, 7A, and 12; where the system has a prepare to perform time function. This function describes all of the steps necessary to have been completed prior to the work about to be completed.).

As per claim 12, Schloss teaches:

The group work control method as claimed in claim 7 further comprising:

Updating said schedule file when it is confirmed that a user has completed a work item (see column 13 lines 21-67, column 14 lines 1-42, and figures 12A and 12B; where the system checks the dynamic conditions and determines where the conditions have been satisfied or not. The system then updates based on the results of this determination.).

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As per claim 13, Schloss teaches:

A work control program product comprising a computer readable medium having computer program logic stored therein for controlling a work having a plurality of work steps through a network of terminals connected to each other by a communication line by the use of a template file in which contains a standard work time, wherein said computer program logic comprises:

amending a template file by registering a start-up date of said work steps in a calendar file (see column 5 lines 28-63 and figures 2 and 3; where a user can set the start-up date, finish date, and specific times for an event based off of a template.);

generating a schedule file containing a day's program of said work steps according to the template file as amended (see column 5 lines 28-63 and figures 2 and 3; where an event can be created based on off of a template file. The event has blocks available for inserting information regarding the works steps necessary for the event. A user can input the start and stop dates of the event and can figure these values to include a single day such that the schedule contains the work items for a single day.); and

storing said schedule file in a database accessible through said network (see column 5 lines 28-44 and figure 1; where an electronic

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calendar is a database that contains events and event groups. This enables events to be scheduled.).

Schloss does not explicitly teach a method "for developing semiconductor devices". However, Schloss discloses a method for scheduling events that can be applied to a variety of industries, regardless of the intended field of use of the method. Schloss teaches a method for scheduling events in the healthcare industry, though the system has utility in other applications (see column 14 lines 43-46). The system being adapted "for developing semiconductor devices" is irrelevant since the intended use does not change the overall functionality of the system. The intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Therefore, it would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the Schloss system "for developing semiconductor devices" because Schloss system is designed to be used in a scheduling work items with a plurality of work steps regardless of the intended use.

As per claim 14, Schloss teaches:

A work control program product comprising a computer readable medium having computer program logic stored therein for controlling a work having a plurality of work steps through a network of terminals connected to each other by a communication line, wherein said computer program logic comprises:

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obtaining a development project as registered in said network (see column 5 lines 28-63 and figures 2-7; where a user is displayed a project and all of the work item steps in the project.);

determining whether or not a schedule file as prepared corresponding to said development project is updated see column 13 lines 21-67, column 14 lines 1-42, and figures 12A and 12B; where the system checks the dynamic conditions and determines where the conditions have been satisfied or not. The system then updates based on the results of this determination.);

obtaining the latest schedule file as updated when said schedule file is updated (see column 13 lines 21-67, column 14 lines 1-42, and figures 12A and 12B; where the system checks the dynamic conditions and determines where the conditions have been satisfied or not. The system then updates based on the results of this determination. Since these changes are made at the database level, all of those accessing the system will be accessing the database and therefore be receiving the most up to date data. See page 12 of the specification.); and

displaying the latest schedule file as obtained in the form of a flowchart (see column 13 lines 21-67, column 14 lines 1-42, and figures 12A and 12B; where the system checks the dynamic conditions and determines where the conditions have been satisfied or not. The system

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then updates based on the results of this determination. Since these changes are made at the database level, all of those accessing the system will be accessing the database and therefore be receiving the most up to date data. See page 12 of the specification. Figure 12 is a flow chart.).

Schloss does not explicitly teach a method “for developing semiconductor devices”. However, Schloss discloses a method for scheduling events that can be applied to a variety of industries, regardless of the intended field of use of the method. Schloss teaches a method for scheduling events in the healthcare industry, though the system has utility in other applications (see column 14 lines 43-46). The system being adapted “for developing semiconductor devices” is irrelevant since the intended use does not change the overall functionality of the system. The intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Therefore, it would have been obvious, at the time of the invention, to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the Schloss system “for developing semiconductor devices” because Schloss system is designed to be used in a scheduling work items with a plurality of work steps regardless of the intended use.

Conclusion

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7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following are pertinent to the current invention, though not relied upon:

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kalyan K. Deshpande whose telephone number is (571)272-5880. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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kkd


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Art Unit 3623